

REMARKS

By this amendment, claim 16 has been amended and claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1-13, 16-18 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1, 7, and 16 are independent claims.

Entry of the Amendments and Remarks is respectfully requested because entry of Amendment places the present application in condition for allowance, or in the alternative, better form for appeal. No new matters are believed to be added by these Amendments. In view of the above amendments and the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending objections and rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Claim Objection

In the Office Action, claims 16-18 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 17 and 18 now depend on independent claim 16. This amendment is not made for the purpose of avoiding prior art or narrowing the claimed invention, and no change in claim scope is intended. Therefore Applicants do not intend to relinquish any subject matter by these amendments. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 16-18, as amended, overcome the stated objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection for claims 16-18.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U. S. Patent No. 6,111,559 issued to Motomura, *et al.* (“Motomura”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled thus rendering this rejection moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection of claims 14 and 15.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 1-13 are allowed.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 16-18 contain allowable subject matter. Claim 16 has been amended to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 16-18 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submits that all of the stated objections and grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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